

In the Claims

Please withdraw claims 8, 20 and 27-34 without prejudice.

1. (Previously Amended) A vessel for observing a chemical substance, comprising:

a base portion;

an optically transmissive wall portion projecting away from the base portion, the base portion and the wall portion defining an interface region at an interface between the base portion and the wall portion, the base portion and the wall portion defining an exterior region and an interior region, the interior region being configured to contain the chemical substance and having an opening through which the chemical substance can pass, the wall portion having an axis; and

a background material having a first surface and a second surface facing opposite from the first surface, the first surface of the background material being fixedly attached to the base portion and/or the interface region, the first surface of the background material being visible through the wall portion from the exterior region, the background material having an asymmetrical contour about the axis.

2. (Original) The vessel of claim 1 wherein the background material includes a paint layer, further wherein the first surface of the background material is defined by a first surface of the paint layer and the second surface of the background material is defined by the second surface of the paint layer.

3. (Previously Amended) A vessel for observing a chemical substance, comprising:

a base portion;

an optically transmissive wall portion projecting away from the base portion, the base portion and the wall portion defining an interface region at an interface between the base portion and the wall portion, the base portion

and the wall portion defining an exterior region and an interior region, the interior region being configured to contain the chemical substance and having an opening through which the chemical substance can pass; and a background material having a first surface and a second surface facing opposite from the first surface, the first surface of the background material being fixedly attached to the base portion and/or the interface region, the first surface of the background material being visible through the wall portion from the exterior region;

wherein the base portion and/or the interface region have an inner surface defining the interior region and an outer surface defining the exterior region, and further wherein the background material is disposed between the inner and outer surfaces.

4. (Original) The vessel of claim 1 wherein the base portion, the wall portion and the interface region are integrally formed with each other.

5. (Original) The vessel of claim 1 wherein the base portion and the wall portion each have an inner surface defining the interior region and an outer surface defining the exterior region with the first surface of the background material disposed adjacent to the outer surface of the wall portion and/or the interface region, and further wherein the vessel further comprises a protective layer adjacent to the second surface of the background material.

6. (Original) The vessel of claim 1 wherein the background material has a single hue.

7. (Original) The vessel of claim 1 wherein the background material is opaque.

8. (Withdrawn)

9. (Original) The vessel of claim 1 wherein the background material covers at least part of the wall portion.

10. (Original) The vessel of claim 1 wherein at least a portion of the background material is white.

11. (Original) The vessel of claim 1 wherein at least a portion of the background material is black.

12. (Original) The vessel of claim 1 wherein the background material covers at least approximately the entire base portion.

13. (Original) The vessel of claim 1 wherein the background material extends over at least part of both the base portion and the wall portion.

14. (Original) The vessel of claim 1 wherein the background material includes a flexible sheet adhesively bonded to the base portion and/or the wall portion.

15. (Original) The vessel of claim 1 wherein the background material includes an elongated strip.

16. (Original) The vessel of claim 1 wherein a perimeter of the background material on the wall portion has an elliptical shape.

17. (Original) The vessel of claim 1 wherein the base portion has a generally circular shape and the wall portion has a generally conical lower portion and a generally cylindrical upper portion.

18. (Original) A vessel for observing a chemical substance, comprising:
a base portion having an outer surface and an inner surface;

an optically transmissive wall portion projecting away from the base portion and having an inner surface and an outer surface, the outer surfaces of the base portion and the wall portion defining an exterior region, the inner surfaces of the base portion and the wall portion defining an interior region, the interior region being configured to contain the chemical substance and having an opening configured to removably receive the chemical substance; and

a background material having a first surface and a second surface facing away from the first surface, the background material being positioned between the inner and outer surfaces of at least one of the base portion and the wall portion, the first surface of the background material being visible through the wall portion from the exterior region.

19. (Original) The vessel of claim 18 wherein the background material has a single hue.

20. (Withdrawn)

21. (Original) The vessel of claim 18 wherein at least a portion of the background material is white.

22. (Original) The vessel of claim 18 wherein the background material covers at least approximately the entire base portion.

23. (Original) The vessel of claim 18 wherein the background material extends over at least part of both the base portion and the wall portion.

24. (Original) The vessel of claim 18 wherein the background material includes a flexible sheet adhesively bonded to the base portion and/or the wall portion.

N 25. (Original) The vessel of claim 18 wherein the background material includes an elongated strip.

26. (Original) The vessel of claim 18 wherein the base portion has a generally circular shape and the wall portion has a generally conical lower part adjacent to the base portion and a generally cylindrical upper part adjacent to the lower part.

27. (Withdrawn)

28. (Withdrawn)

29. (Withdrawn)

30. (Withdrawn)

31. (Withdrawn)

32. (Withdrawn)

33. (Withdrawn)

34. (Withdrawn)

35-72. (Cancelled).